



Idaho's Forest Legacy Program

Idaho's Forest Legacy Program (FLP) recognizes that to protect forest values and the benefits of forested lands to society, it is first necessary to maintain those lands as forests. Idaho's privately owned forestlands are becoming increasingly valuable and sought after for purposes other than their traditional uses. Unfortunately, the inevitable development of this land threatens all that makes it attractive, including sustained wildlife, scenic and timber values. Idaho's FLP is a tool that can reconcile the desire of private landowners to capture the value of their lands without destroying the underlying benefits that those forests provide.

The FLP provides funding to Idaho to purchase conservation easements on private lands that might otherwise be developed and lost as forests. The program is voluntary and will include only those private landowners who wish to sell development rights to their lands. For those landowners, participation in the program allows them to capture the development value of their land, while assuring it will remain as forestland forever. The program is an important tool for protecting the economic and environmental values associated with private forestlands upon which so many Idaho communities rely. FLP conservation easements are legally binding agreements that transfer a negotiated set of property rights from the landowner to the State of Idaho without removing that property from private ownership. In general, Idaho's FLP conservation easements restrict development and mineral extraction, require sustainable forestry practices, and protect other values such as water, cultural resources, and fish and wildlife habitat.

By allowing a one-time purchase of the "developmental rights" by the State of Idaho, landowners can derive both immediate financial benefits and be confident, along with the public, that the lands enrolled in the program will remain as forests in perpetuity. The Idaho Department of Lands will be responsible for assuring that the terms of the easement are met.

More information about the program can be found in [Idaho's Forest Action Plan-Resource Strategy](#).

Program Goals and Objectives

In accordance with the federal Forest Legacy Program, the purpose of Idaho's Forest Legacy Program is to protect environmentally important forest areas and the public values they provide. Within this broad context, specific goals for the program are identified below.

Goals

- Identify high priority forestlands in Idaho
- Maintain the cultural and economic stability of rural communities by conserving *working* forest landscapes
- Conserve and/or enhance water quality
- Maintain unique forest habitats
- Protect and provide habitat for native fish, wildlife and plants
- Protect the social values that forests provide such as public recreation, scenic, cultural and historical values

To achieve program goals and further leverage Idaho's conservation efforts, the following objectives will be used to direct the FLP in Idaho.

Objectives

- Promote wildlife connectivity between undeveloped areas
- Focus efforts on projects with large areas of contiguous forest (>100 acres)
- Promote sustainable forest management practices (Landowner Forest Stewardship Plan, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council, American Tree Farm System)
- Promote public access and recreation opportunities
- Protect Threatened and Endangered species habitat
- Complement previous investments in forestland conservation

To Date Statistics (February 2022)

- 43 conservation easement purchases: 99,005 acres
- 14 donated conservation easements: 3,273 acres
- Federal Funds: \$42,485,552
- Non-Federal Cost-Share: \$24,043,386
- 88,500 acres open to public recreation, free of charge, in perpetuity

Contact Information

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For more information, visit:

<https://www.idl.idaho.gov/forestry/forest-legacy-program>

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